



University of Iceland emergency response plan for the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) epidemic 2020



The Rector's project management team for creating a response plan

1 Activation and deactivation

The Department of Civil Protection will announce emergency levels and changes to these.

Date	Category	Description
27 January 2020	Uncertainty phase	Announcement from the Directorate of Health
28 January 2020	Alert phase	Announcement from the Directorate of Health

1.1 Preparedness at the University of Iceland.

If the Department of Civil Protection announces a change of emergency level, the response will be immediate.

It may be that the University of Iceland needs to make changes to operations and teaching arrangements without a new emergency level being announced, e.g. due to significant numbers of absences.

The Rector and school deans are responsible for making such decisions in the conventional manner.

1.2 Deactivation

The University of Iceland emergency response plan will not be deactivated until a formal notification is issued by the authorities (the Chief Epidemiologist at the Directorate of Health or the Department of Civil Protection).

1.3 Project management team

The Rector has appointed a project management team to create an emergency response plan based on guidelines from the Department of Civil Protection and the Chief Epidemiologist at the Directorate of Health.

The project management team comprises:

Eva Benediktsdóttir, microbiologist

Jón Örn Guðbjartsson, Director of the Division of Marketing and Public Relations

Sigríður Klara Böðvarsdóttir, Director of the Biomedical Centre, member of the Health and Safety Committee

Snorri Páll Davíðsson, employee of the Health and Safety Committee

Sveinbjörn Gizurarson, Chair of the Health and Safety Committee

1.4 Information acquisition and dissemination

Information for staff and students:

- The Health and Safety Committee shall follow announcements from the authorities, i.e. the Chief Epidemiologist and/or the Department of Civil Protection.

- If new information emerges regarding disease transmission, incubation period or other information relevant to the University, it will be published on the Directorate of Health website. The emergency response plan shall be based on and refer to this information.
- Absences due to illness shall be reported as normal.
- The Division of Marketing and Public Relations shall add suggestions and guidelines to the University website.

2 Emergency response plan

2.1 Uncertainty phase

Contingency plan created. The University will keep staff, students and other stakeholders informed of preparation efforts and the planned response, should we enter an alert phase or distress phase.

The Division of Marketing and Public Relations will prepare an announcement in consultation with the University of Iceland Emergency Response Board:

Students and staff will be kept informed about the epidemic by email. Banners will also be added to the UI website and Ugly, linking to the Directorate of Health website:

<https://www.landlaeknir.is/>

2.1.1 Message to service desk managers and Icelandic Student Services.

- Emergency response plan is in effect – Uncertainty phase.
- They will consider how to respond if the emergency level is raised.
- Service desks are likely places for disease transmission. There is contact between service workers and customers and documents are exchanged.
- Information from the Directorate of Health: Guidance document for frontline service staff:
 - Available in four languages: Icelandic, English, Polish and Spanish.
 - <https://www.landlaeknir.is/koronaveira/upplýsingar-vegna-ferdalaga/>
- Staff will be asked to familiarise themselves with the questions and answers on the World Health Organization website:
 - <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>

2.1.2 Message to building managers

- They distribute posters.
- They distribute hand sanitisers.

2.1.3 Message to everyone, staff and students

- Emergency response plan is in effect – Uncertainty phase.
- People urged to keep abreast of information from the World Health Organization:
 - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
- People are urged to wash their hands more often than usual.
- Posters:
 - "5 ways to stop the spread of flue", same applies to Corona virus

2.1.4 Message to school deans and faculty heads

- Emergency response plan is in effect – Uncertainty phase.
- School deans and faculty heads are urged to talk to their staff about how to respond if the emergency level is raised.
- Ask teaching staff to familiarise themselves with distance teaching technology if they have not already done so.
- Ask teaching staff to determine how to address eligibility to sit exams for courses where attendance is mandatory. Teaching staff shall offer alternative solutions for students who cannot attend practical classes due to illness or if classes are cancelled.
- Should any services be closed in an alert phase?
 - e.g. offices or service desks?

2.2 Alert phase

In addition to the uncertainty phase:

The University of Iceland Emergency Response Board will convene and review the next steps and actions that may need to be taken.

It is important that the University's response is well considered and based on instructions from the Department of Civil Protection. All information and suggestions issued at the uncertainty phase will be repeated.

- The Division of Marketing and Public Relations will prepare information in collaboration with the Emergency Response Board and publish this information on the website.
- Social media will be used to disseminate material.
- Special posters will be distributed.
 - "Reduce risk of infection" from the Directorate of Health.

2.2.1 Message to everyone, staff and students

- Follow instructions from the Department of Civil Protection.
- Do not take unnecessary trips.
- Stay at home if you experience symptoms; do not attend University if you are ill.
- Remain at home until you have fully recovered.
- Ask colleagues to look after specimens/cultures etc.
- Look out for one another, send people home if they appear to be ill.
- Take particular care to look out for people who have no support network in Iceland.
- Absences due to illness reported as normal.

2.2.2 Message to school deans and faculty heads

- The dean of each school shall ensure that all staff know to follow the University's emergency response plan regarding operations during an alert phase.

2.2.3 Message to teaching staff

- Same as to all other staff.
- In addition:
 - Instructors are urged to make provisions for distance teaching.
 - Instructors are urged to find ways for students to remain eligible to sit exams.
 - Instructors shall report absences due to illness that linked to this virus.

2.3 Distress phase

In addition to the alert phase:

- The University of Iceland Emergency Response Board will convene and formulate a plan. The Rector and school deans will assign staff members the tasks described in the University's emergency response plan for operations during a distress phase.
- If there is a ban on gatherings of people, conventional teaching at the University will be suspended. Instructors may continue to teach online (distance teaching) where possible.
- N.B. Many people have keys for the exterior doors in the buildings in which they work. Complete closure is actually not possible and perhaps not desirable, because various people will need to work on projects or experiments.
- The Rector will take a formal decision regarding closure, which will apply to both teaching and research at the University.

- The Division of Marketing and Public Relations will be responsible for distributing information and general answering of telephones.
 - The decision will be announced on the University website and through social media.
 - An announcement will be broadcast on the radio.
 - Conspicuous notices will be put up at the entrances to buildings.
- Safety regarding buildings and equipment during a closure.
 - Two people will be on shift in accordance with a shift plan determined by Facilities Management - 834 6512
 - Öryggismiðstöðin keeps a 24 hour watch - 530 2400
- Only certain staff members will be authorised to be present.
 - Emergency Response Board.
 - Others:
 - * The building manager on shift will be able to lock buildings which are otherwise open during the day, between 7 am and 4 pm. The building manager will also be able to disable key fobs, if necessary. If people need to get into a locked building in order to save a specimen or cell culture from damage, they must contact the building manager on shift: 834-6512.
 - The coordinator for distance teaching may need to be contactable online in order to provide guidance to instructors who want to continue to teach.
- The Division of Information Technology will ensure that the IT system is in order.

2.4 Teaching if the University is closed

Practical teaching will be suspended, instructors will offer students alternatives so that they can remain eligible to sit the exam. Instructors may determine whether they use distance teaching, e.g. using teleconferencing technology, in order to continue teaching in accordance with the course catalogue.

2.4.1 Learning management system

A learning management system is software used to create course webs for each course. Course webs feature various tools that support the work of an instructor. At the University of Iceland, there are two systems in formal use: Ugly course webs and Moodle. One system is being trialled – Canvas. Students and instructors in the test group will use this system if the University is closed.

2.4.2 Overview of solutions for distance teaching available at the University of Iceland

- Teleconferencing solutions:
 - If instructors wish to hold a teleconference with students on a course, there are two possible solutions:
 - * Microsoft Teams, see instructions: <http://uts.hi.is/teams>
 - * Zoom, see instructions: <http://uts.hi.is/node/1414>
- Recordings of lectures and teaching material:
 - Panopto is the University of Iceland recording system, which teaching staff use to record lectures and teaching material. It is also possible to use it to live stream material. The program is relatively simple to use and it is possible to watch recordings in most browsers and smart devices.
 - See instructions: <https://kennslumidstod.hi.is/geyma/rafraent-nam/panopto/>
- Exam environments:
 - If instructors wish to hold distance examinations, there are two options. It is recommended that larger examinations be held in Inspira, but Moodle tests are more commonly used for smaller tests and surveys:
 - * Inspira. See instructions: <https://ugla.hi.is/kerfi/view/page.php?sid=4454>
 - * Tests in Moodle (only for those with a Moodle page set up)

2.4.3 Scenarios

- Scenario 1 – Uglya
 - Instructors use Uglya as a learning management system to share slides and various further reading with students. See instructions: <https://kennslumidstod.hi.is/fraedsluefni/namsumsjonarkerfi/kennsluvefur-uglu/>
 - If the University is closed and instructors wish to record lectures and share these with students, they can use Panopto to do so.
 - If they want to hold a conference call with students on a course, they can use Zoom or Teams.
 - If they want to hold an exam for the course, they can use Inspira.
- Scenario 2 – Moodle
 - Instructors have a Moodle page to share course material and communicate with students.
 - Moodle is already linked to Panopto and other systems that enable distance teaching and most instructors who use Moodle are familiar with these.

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- See instructions: <http://moodlehjalp.hi.is/>
 - Scenario 3 – Canvas
 - If instructors are in the test group for Canvas and have a course web on Canvas to share course material and communicate with students. Instructors can use the same channels as before to get help with using Canvas.

2.5 Organisation of University operations after reopening.

- The Emergency Response Board shall convene and determine the steps to be taken and preparedness required.
- Consideration shall be given to the health and safety of students and staff.
- The Rector and school deans shall create a plan for continuing University operations in accordance with the situation.
- The Division of Marketing and Public Relations will inform students, teaching staff and other stakeholders of the University's plan for continuing operations in consultation with the Emergency Response Board.
- Prepare buildings and classrooms.
- Review emergency response plan in light of experience.